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FOR RELEASE: 3 May 1973

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FROM: Kika de la Garza

WASHINGTON D C -- Legislation extending the emergency rural loan program was signed by the President April 20th. The legislation provides in part: All persons on farms and in rural areas living in counties which had been designated as disaster areas by the Secretary of Agriculture prior to Dec 27, 1972, and who had suffered losses of crops or other property due to natural causes prior to that date but had not filed applications for aid under the FIA disaster program, shall have 18 days from enactment of the pending legislation to file applications. If they meet eligibility requirements they would be entitled to one percent loans, with the first \$5,000 of the loan forgiven, as provided before the program was terminated by the Administration. The 18-day period for receipt of applications was provided to give persons in Secretarially-designated disaster counties equal access to favorable loan provisions, comparable with recipients in those counties which had been designated by the President as disaster areas -- and were given an 18-day period Dec 27 to perfect their loan applications and still qualify for the more favorable provisions of the loan program. You can check with FHA or SBA for further information if you feel you qualify and did not apply timely.

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A CORRECT STEP -- It is my feeling, which I am sure is shared by South Texans generally, that the Federal Communications Commission was absolutely right in slapping a stiff fine -- and, in effect, a cease-and-desist order -- on a so-called "topless" radio program originating in California. I hope this is the beginning of a strong move against pornography on radio and television all over the country.

These programs come into our homes over air waves that belong to the public -- and I don't for a moment believe that any appreciable segment of the public approves of them. Much has been said on behalf of the environment that the people have a right to "clean air. We have a right, also, to clean air waves. Pornography and obscenity have no place on radio and television. For that matter, I don't think they have a place anywhere. Certainly not in our homes.

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SAVING SOUTH TEXAS SOIL -- An interesting and informative report of Soil Conservation Service operations in Texas and the 15th Congressional District last year has been given me by State Conservationist Edward E Thomas. The report points up the great value of the SCS work in our area.

There are now five authorized resource conservation and development projects in Texas. Eight additional multi-county areas with applications accepted by the U S Department of Agriculture are awaiting planning authorization. Part of the Rio Bravo Project, which includes Starr, Jim Hogg and Zapata Counties in our District, is authorized for planning.

From the report I learn that soil surveys have been made on about 110 million acres of the 168 million acres in Texas to be surveyed. Some four million acres were surveyed during 1972. About 52 percent of the 15th District is covered by soil surveys. This work has been completed in Starr County, and Cameron and Jim Hogg Counties have been surveyed but the results not yet published.

The use of outdoor learning areas, a new concept in environmental education, is spreading rapidly in Texas. Outdoor learning experiences enhance the development of knowledge about conservation, ecology, and other related environmental concerns. These outdoor learning areas supplement other types of instruction at all grade levels. The SCS is helping with five such areas in our District. "Especially noteworthy," the report says, is the outdoor learning area in Rio Grande City, which six organizations are helping to sponsor.

South Texas cities and planning bodies continue to find a wide variety of SCS technical material helpful in solving their resource problems. Last year this material was used by 101 units of government in the 15th District. Soils information about drainage problems, erosion hazards, foundation limitations, septic tank suitability, and other land characteristics are especially valuable in helping to arrive at land use and treatment decisions.

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VISITORS FROM HOME -- Visiting my office from home this week were Judge and Mrs Fidencio G Garza, Jr and their daughter Cheryll of Falfurrias; Mr Bob Anderson of Harlingen; and Mr Abel Martinez of Washington D C formerly of Edinburg.

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